

Estimates^ and in 1846, as Paymaster-General, he was again concerned with military finance. He had thus become interested in military questions, had acquired some knowledge of them, and had made the acquaintance of officials capable of helping him when he needed further information.

Macaulay made good use of these advantages. Military affairs are more adequately treated in his pages than in previous histories of the same time. He does not confine himself either to relating campaigns and battles, or to tracing the development of the army, but endeavours to show the relation of the army to the nation. He takes a broad and comprehensive view of the whole subject, which compensates for errors of detail.

It was necessary to take a broad view, for the history of an army cannot be understood if it is regarded apart from the history of the nation. The period with which Macaulay had to deal was a decisive one both for the development of our military institutions and the development of our political institutions. Both alike reflected the political conditions of the age in which they took shape. The British army grew up in the midst of the struggle against absolute monarchy, and every vicissitude in the struggle influenced its growth.

As Macaulay frequently points out, hostility to the existence of an army was a fundamental principle with the

politicians of the latter part of the
seventeenth century.
This was the result of the Civil War. The
twelve years' military rule which followed it had left deep
and enduring traces in the public mind. The name of
standing army was long held in abhorrence/¹ The nation was
sick of the very name, and held that a standing army
was fatal to freedom and unnecessary for defence.
¹1, 136 (ii); 283 (iii).